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OXC-1962
Copy 6 of 6
19 July 1961

Mr. Patrick Coyne
Executive Secretary
President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board
Executive Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Coyne:

The information given below is forwarded in answer to your request of 17 July 1961 to the Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Following the loss of the U-2 aircraft in the USSR on 1 May 1960, a damage assessment was prepared which attempted to compile information either compromised or possibly compromised by virtue of the incident. The assessment established that the principal area of concern was that information known to Francis Gary Powers which could be extracted from him through Soviet interrogation.

There is no concrete evidence to substantiate that Mr. Powers knew any information regarding the "follow-on vehicle" to the U-2. Of all the pilots involved, Powers reputedly was one of the least inquisitive concerning other activities of this Agency. From the inception of the follow-on program every attempt has been made to compartment it from the earlier program.

Experience has shown that among any group of pilots it is natural that speculation will ensue regarding aircraft which will be developed with capabilities beyond the aircraft they fly. Being aware of the speed, altitude, range, etc., of the U-2, and constantly improving Soviet defense capabilities, these pilots undoubtedly speculated as to what a later plane might be like. A thorough debriefing of all individuals in May, June and July, 1960, in positions similar to Mr. Powers revealed that there was such speculation among some members of the group that proposals were probably being considered for a follow-on vehicle. In addition, there appears to have been diversified speculation as to what method of operation would be utilized; one individual concluded that the B-58 would be used as a carrier vehicle; several individuals concluded that attempts would be made to operate from a U. S. rather than a

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foreign base. A number of the men were aware of the presence of former project associates at the old U-2 testing grounds at [REDACTED] and therefore, concluded that [REDACTED] might possibly be utilized to test the "follow-on vehicle."

Speculation regarding the capabilities of a follow-on vehicle was diverse and by and large inaccurate. Such speculation included speed in the mach 2-3 range, air altitude capability of over 100,000 feet, utilization of two engines - a turbo jet to get it airborne and a ram jet to keep it aloft, and that the aircraft might require towing to become airborne.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Richard M. Bissell, Jr.

Richard M. Bissell, Jr.
Deputy Director

cc: AD/Security

Signature Recommended:

[REDACTED]
Colonel, USAF
Acting Chief, DPD-DD/P

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